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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 70/NO. 29 AUGUST 7, 2006

INSIDE

Another coal miner killed on job in Kentucky; U.S. toll is 36 in 2006

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A victory for political rights!

State orders end to use of ‘loyalty oath’

Responds to Pennsylvania SWP campaign



Militant/Arrin Hawkins

Osborne Hart (right), SWP candidate for Pennsylvania governor, and John Staggs (left), the party's candidate for State House District 198 in Philadelphia, with attorney Eric Lieberman of the constitutional rights law firm Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky and Lieberman at the firm's New York office July 26. Lieberman represented the Socialist Workers campaign in the successful fight against the “loyalty oath” in Pennsylvania.

BY JOHN STUDER

PHILADELPHIA, July 25—“This is a significant victory for political rights, for the working class,” John Staggs told the *Militant* today. Staggs, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for State House District 198 here in Philadelphia, was responding to news that Pennsylvania attorney general Thomas Corbett has ordered the Department of State to “discontinue use of the [loyalty] oath” requiring all candidates for public office in the state to swear they are “not a subversive person.”

Louis Boyle, Department of State

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Socialist candidates in N.Y.: Nationalize energy industry!

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

WOODSIDE, Queens, July 23—“The cause of this blackout is not mainly a technical problem. The problem is Con Edison is in the business to make profits for its owners, not to provide electrical service,” said Martín Koppel, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York State attorney general. He was speaking with residents of this working-class area, which had been hit by a weeklong power outage.

“Our campaign calls for nationalizing the energy industry,” he said. “The energy companies must be taken out of private hands and run as a public utility for the benefit of the majority.

“This means opening their books to expose all their so-called business secrets

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Militant/Joel Britton

Martín Koppel, SWP candidate for New York attorney general, campaigns July 23 in Woodside, Queens, hit by a weeklong blackout. Con Ed “relief station” is in background.

Defeat of Utah coal boss suit: a gain for labor, working class

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS, EDITOR

On behalf of the *Militant*, I want to thank the thousands of working people and others, including many trade unionists, who helped score an important victory for the working class and labor movement.

On July 6 Federal Judge Dee Benson in Salt Lake City signed an order dismissing “with prejudice” a retaliatory lawsuit by C.W. Mining against the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), 16 coal miners who helped lead a nearly three-year-long struggle to win UMWA representation at the company's Co-Op mine in Utah, and the *Militant*. “With prejudice” means the company cannot

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Israeli military widens ground invasion of Lebanon

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

July 26—Israeli soldiers invaded southern Lebanon in force this week in an expansion of Tel Aviv's brutal assault in that Middle Eastern country. Crossing the border with tanks, bulldozers, and armored cars, the Israeli military said it plans to establish an occupation over an area one to two miles deep into Lebanese territory. “Unless there is a multinational force that will enter and take control,” Israeli defense minister Amir Peretz said on Israeli radio yesterday, “we will continue to fire against anyone who enters the designated strip.”

Representatives of 18 governments and others at a Middle East conference in Rome today did not come to an

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Getty Images/Uriel Sinai

Israeli armored column crosses into southern Lebanon July 25 near Israeli city of Avivim. Tel Aviv has expanded its bombing campaign and ground invasion of Lebanon.

City Council in Avon Park, Florida, rejects anti-immigrant ordinance

BY BERNIE SENTER

AVON PARK, Florida, July 24—After protests by immigrant workers and their supporters, and pressure from local businessmen, the city council here voted today to kill an ordinance that would have shut down local businesses alleged to hire undocumented workers and fined landlords who rent to those without residency papers. The vote came at the end of a five-hour public hearing in a 330-seat community center that was filled to capacity. More than 100 people spoke out on the proposal.

Outside, hundreds rallied against the measure, including students and workers who came after their shifts.

The day before some 500 rallied against the ordinance in a park in front of city hall. Protesters came from small towns throughout central Florida and from as far south as Homestead and Immokalee. Two smaller demonstrations, of 50 and 125 people, took place during the preceding week.

Avon Park is a town of about 9,000 people. It is surrounded by orange groves. Many of those who work in nearby fields

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Also Inside:

Pro-choice demonstrators express support for clinic in Jackson, Mississippi

BY ARRIN HAWKINS

JACKSON, Mississippi—Some 90 supporters of women's rights rallied at the state capitol here July 22 concluding the weeklong "Mississippi Reproductive Freedom Summer." Defenders of a woman's right to choose converged that week to express support for the last remaining clinic that provides abortions in the state.

The existence of only one such clinic in the entire state places a special burden on working-class and farm women, who must travel long distances and pay hotel costs to receive care.

Responding to the call by the Jackson Area National Organization for Women, some 200 defenders of women's rights gathered for a rally July 15, and around 40 turned out for daily protests across the city throughout the week.

Operation Save America, a rightwing group opposed to abortion rights, had announced plans earlier this year for an eight-day campaign in Jackson July 15–22 to shut down the Jackson Women's Health Organization. In fact, however, the group only mobilized 100 supporters at its height in Jackson—never more than a couple of dozen outside the clinic during work hours.

Throughout the week the rightists' actions served to further isolate themselves from Jackson residents.

On July 17 Operation Save America gathered on the steps of the state capitol to sign the "Emancipation Proclamation" of the unborn fetus. Several Jackson residents in a city that is 70 percent African-American came out to protest. "They are using our history and turning it upside down," said Nicole Moses, 18.

Others throughout the week linked the effort to support the Jackson clinic to the struggle for Black rights in Mississippi in the 1960s.

"We should remember all those who have shed blood for our freedom, Medgar Evers, Emmett Till, and many others, and the many women who have died because of unsafe abortions," said Nsombi Lambright, director of the Mississippi American Civil Liberties Union, at a July 22 rally.



Militant/Arrin Hawkins

Michelle Colon, president of the local National Organization for Women, speaks at July 20 press conference in Jackson, Mississippi, to support women's clinic.

Evers, a leader of the civil rights movement in Mississippi, was killed by the Klan in 1963, and Till, 14, was abducted and killed by racists in August 1955 in Money, Mississippi.

On July 18, the rightist group held what they called "Mississippi burning," in which they tore up and burned the Koran and the gay pride flag. A church in Pearl, Mississippi, used by the rightists as a base for their operations, shut its doors to them after learning that they had burned the Koran on their property.

"I'm opposed to abortion," Mary Woodward, of the Catholic Diocese of Jackson, told the *Clarion-Ledger*, "but I didn't see what happened with the burning of the Koran…as having anything to do with the issue."

At a July 20 press conference organized by Mississippi Reproductive Freedom Summer Coalition, several defenders of women's rights, and local religious and community organizations in Jackson, spoke out against the rightists' actions and bigotry.

"The narrow views and actions of Operation Save America this week do not reflect the views of the majority of Mississippians," said Deborah Watkins of UNITY Mississippi, a gay rights organization in Jackson.

Ali ShamisdDeen, a Muslim and local civil rights attorney, called their acts "horrendous, and an attempt to garner support by appealing to those who hold these bigotries."

"Bosses make profits and workers are weakened by keeping women in a second-sex status," Ellie García, a garment worker from Atlanta and member of the Socialist Worker Party, told the press. "The freedom to decide whether and when to bear children is a fundamental right for women to win full equality."

Help 'Militant' get second digital camera

Militant reporters were in Cuba last week to cover political developments there. At the same time, Arrin Hawkins went to Jackson, Mississippi, to report for the socialist paper on the actions by women's rights supporters in defense of the sole abortion clinic in that state (see article above). This is one of many recent occasions where overlapping reporting trips have necessitated more than one camera to take photos that can be sent to the paper electronically in the heat of the action. The *Militant* has had only one digital camera. Please help us pay for a second one, which costs $2,500. Send your donation to the *Militant* at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018. As we go to press, we have received $550. Please continue to contribute generously.

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Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark: Send 400 Swedish kronor for one year to Bildhuggarvägen 17, 12144 Johanneshov, Stockholm, Sweden.
New Zealand: Send NZ$50 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.
Australia: Send A$50 to P.O. Box 164 Campsie, NSW 2194, Australia.
Pacific Islands: Send NZ$50 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*'s views. These are expressed in editorials.

U.S., Ethiopian rulers step up intervention in Somalia

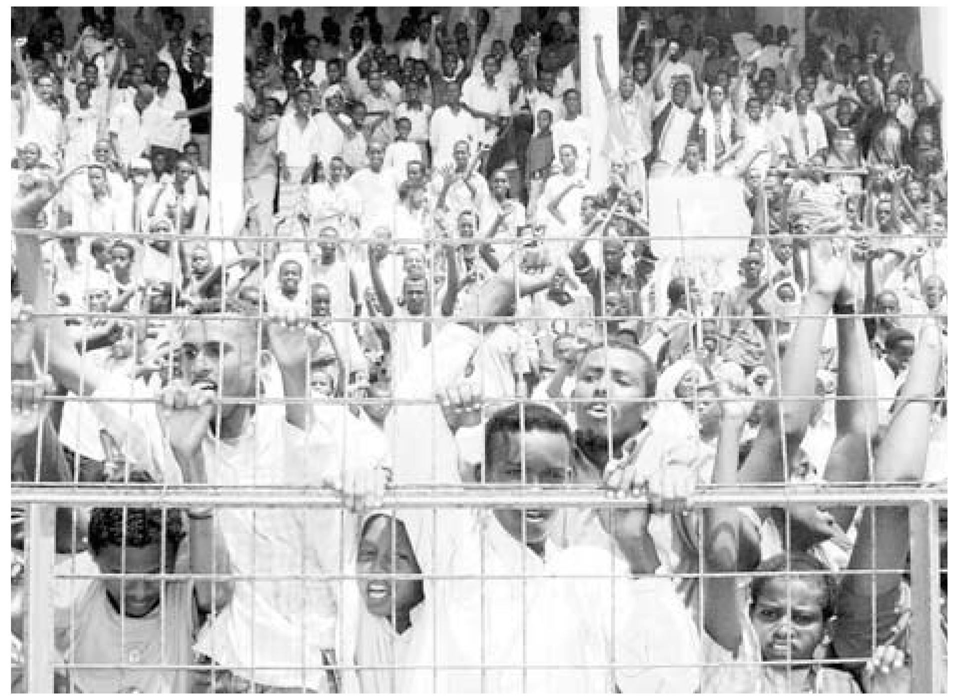
BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Islamist militias in Somalia, which six weeks ago took over the capital city of Mogadishu, are reportedly increasing their military pressure on the U.S.-backed interim government, now based in the city of Baidoa. The government of neighboring Ethiopia, which supports the interim authorities, has sent troops into Somalia to protect the government from the militias, which U.S. officials claim are linked with al-Qaeda.

Somalia, a country of nearly 11 million in the Horn of Africa, faces a legacy of extreme underdevelopment perpetuated by imperialist domination. Until independence in 1960, the country was divided by the British and Italian colonial rulers, who fostered clan and ethnic divisions to maintain their control. In the late 1970s the government of President Mohammed Siad Barre, previously Soviet-backed, became a U.S. ally. Washington encouraged Siad Barre to invade Ethiopia in order to weaken the unfolding Ethiopian revolution. With help from Cuban volunteer troops, however, the imperialist-backed invasion was defeated.

Since 1991, when the Siad Barre regime collapsed, there has been little central governmental authority in Somalia as warring factions have vied for power. The northwest region (previously British Somaliland) broke away and declared itself the Republic of Somaliland. In 1993–94 U.S. troops invaded Somalia but ended in failure, hated by the Somali people. In 2004 the main factions and capitalist politicians signed an agreement to set up a new, interim parliament, which appointed Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed president.

Since then the Union of Islamic Courts has launched a struggle against the interim government that was set up by the long-warring clan bosses. According to a July 11 report by the British Broadcasting Corp., it was organized as "a network of 11 Islamic courts…funded by businessmen who preferred any semblance of law and order to complete anarchy." The organization's stated goal is to restore a system of sharia (Islamic) law and end the factional and clan warfare. "As a grassroots movement they have become increasingly popular among city residents and the business community desperate to see an end to the rule of the gun," the BBC reported. The forces of the Union of Islamic Courts now control large parts of the south, including Mogadishu, while interim president Yusuf's forces control relatively little territory and have retreated to their base in Baidoa.



Reuters/Shabele Media

Protesters rally in Mogadishu, Somalia, July 24 against intervention by Ethiopian troops. Protesters have also condemned Washington's backing of Ethiopian regime.

In response, U.S. government officials have asserted that the Islamist forces will turn Somalia into a base for al-Qaeda. U.S. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said last month, "We don't want to see Somalia turn into a safe haven for foreign terrorists," the *Investor's Business Daily* reported July 20.

The paper's editors stated, "Al-Qaida, which used Somalia as a base in the bombing of the U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya, in 1998, continues to operate there. A friendly government would guarantee an expansion of al-Qaida's activities in Africa." Union of Islamic Courts leaders have denied these allegations.

The fighting in Somalia has also heightened longstanding regional conflicts, including those between the Ethiopian and Somalian governments and between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which won its independence from Ethiopia in 1991.

The Ethiopian government, which previously sent troops into Somalia in 1993 and 1996 to oppose Islamist forces there, has threatened to invade again to defeat the Union of Islamic Courts forces, which have been advancing toward Baidoa. "Ethiopian soldiers have poured over the border to defend the government," the Reuters news agency reported July 21.

The news dispatch said that, as part of trying to pressure the rulers of Ethiopia, the Eritrean government is "continuing to supply weapons, funds, and personnel" to the insurgents in Somalia.

Both the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments denied any presence in Somalia.

Nonetheless, "Residents of Baidoa reported seeing hundreds of Ethiopian troops, in uniform and in marked armored vehicles, entering Baidoa" July 20, according to the Associated Press.

An editorial in the July 24 *Investor's Business Daily* said that Somalia's "transitional government sought troops from Ethiopia to deter Islamist militia encircling the provisional capital, Baidoa. Ethiopia sent hundreds of armored carriers 100 miles into Somalia."

Sheik Hassan Dahir Aweys, a central leader of the Union of Islamic Courts, has reportedly called on the group's supporters to get ready for waging a "holy war" against Ethiopia's government. "We must defend our sovereignty," he said, according to the July 22 *New York Times.*

AP reported that "demonstrators in Mogadishu shouted anti-Ethiopian and anti-U.S. slogans as they marched in the capital" in an Islamist-organized protest.Commenting on the Ethiopian intervention, U.S. assistant secretary of state Jendayi Frazer said July 21, "We have told them not to get drawn into this provocation."

On July 24 a group of Somali legislators asked that Ethiopian troops leave their country, an admission by government officials of the military incursion, Reuters reported.

Florida town rejects anti-immigrant ordinance

Continued from front page

and dairy barns live here.

Most of those who spoke at the hearing opposed the measure. Mayor Thomas Macklin then solicited a motion to table, which would have saved the measure for a vote at a later date. The motion failed. The proposed ordinance was then struck down in a 3–2 vote. "These hearings show me that 70 percent of you haven't read the ordinance," complained Macklin, who voted for the measure. The mayor had campaigned for the bill, crafted after the "Illegal Immigration Relief Act," which was approved July 13 by the city council in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Avon Park city attorney Michael Disler was fired after he expressed his opinion that the ordinance was unconstitutional.

The Avon Park measure would have made English the city's "official language"—prohibiting translation of official forms, public signs, and telephone communications. This provision generated a lot of discussion the night of the vote. Some argued it would propel immigrants to learn English. Others pointed out its pitfalls, which would include minimizing the ability of Spanish speakers to call for emergency medical services.

Nora Santana said the proposal had already promoted a climate of prejudice against those whose first language is not English. When her relatives visited her recently from out of town, talking in Spanish amongst themselves in public, Santana said she was told to "speak English or go back to where she came from." She responded that although "I am Puerto Rican, I came from Fort Benning, Georgia," drawing laughter and applause.

People from various classes and political convictions spoke at the hearing. They included representatives of right-wing groups, such as the Minutemen and Floridians Against Illegal Immigration that supported the ordinance. Robert Barben, whose family owns a fruit company on

Continued on page 7

Farmers take over land in Paraguay

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Thousands of farm families in Paraguay carried out land takeovers in mid-July, demanding that the government of President Nicanor Duarte fulfill its promise of an agrarian reform to address the needs of landless peasants.

On July 12 some 5,000 landless families took over 20 large estates owned by Paraguayan and foreign absentee landlords in seven of the country's 17 provinces, according to South American press agencies. "The occupation of private properties is a legitimate action," said Luis Aguayo, general secretary of the National Coordinating Committee of Peasant Organizations (MCNOC), which organized the nationwide actions.

Aguayo said the owners' claims to the 20 estates were "spurious" because the land had been given to individuals connected to the former dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner, who ruled Paraguay from 1954 to 1989, and many of them lack legal title.

The date of the land takeovers marked the 20th anniversary of the murder of two peasants by the Stroessner regime.

Three thousand peasants blocked a highway in Capiibary in San Pedro province. They were reportedly attacked by 100 cops, who arrested two people and left nine injured.

In the same area, 500 landless peasants occupying El Progreso, an estate owned by a Brazilian landlord, were forced out by police, who burned down their makeshift housing and arrested six of their leaders.

Aguayo told the press that in Paraguay 80 percent of the land is in the hands of 10 percent of the population, and there are 300,000 landless rural families. He said that a year ago MCNOC proposed to the government a plan for expropriating large tracts of idle lands. Duarte promised action by June of this year, he said, but has done nothing, prompting the land occupations.

—CALENDAR—

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Celebrate July 26th! Stand with Internationalist Cuba and in Solidarity with Venezuela and Bolivia. Representatives of Cuba, Venezuela, and Bolivia and others. Sat., July 29. Reception/Dinner, 5:30 p.m.; program, 7:00 p.m. $5 donation; $10 with dinner. *SEIU/1199 Martin Luther King, Jr. Labor Center. 310 W. 43 St. (between 8th and 9th Aves.). Sponsored by a coalition of dozens of organizations.*

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Picket for Antonio Camacho Negrón, Puerto Rican political prisoner. Sat., Aug 5. 12:00 p.m. *Federal Detention Center. 700 Arch St. Sponsored by Pro-Libertad Freedom Campaign.*

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

NEW YORK

Manhattan

The Fight for Women's Rights Today. A panel discussion. Sat., Aug. 5. Dinner 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. Donations: $5 dinner, $5 program. *307 W. 36th St. 10 floor (near 8th Ave; take north elevators). Tel.: (212) 629-6649.*

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

Oppose Israeli Assault on Lebanon and Gaza. Fri., Aug. 4, 7:00 p.m. Donation: $3. *287 Selwyn St., Spreydon. Tel.: 03 930-3373.*

C.W. Mining lawsuit

Continued from front page

refile its case.

We are proud to have shared the same trenches in this fight with the 16 miners, the UMWA, the Socialist Workers Party, many trade unions, and others who were part of or supported this magnificent union organizing struggle.

We would also like to thank two of the miners who helped lead the struggle for a union at Co-Op and the fight against this lawsuit, Alyson Kennedy and Bill Estrada. This week Kennedy and Estrada signed over to the *Militant* the checks for back pay they won from the company because they, along with other miners, had been punitively fired for their union-organizing efforts.

Kennedy's donation of $15,408.46 and Estrada's of $9,818.41—totaling over $25,000—will help the *Militant* continue to report accurately and consistently on social and political struggles by workers and farmers the world over—including efforts to organize unions to fight for livable wages, safety, and dignity on the job.

"The *Militant* was the only paper that reported week after week, accurately, the facts of our struggle for a union," said Bill Estrada in an interview. "It never stopped doing that, while coverage by other papers in Utah dropped off. Many miners who fought for UMWA representation at Co-Op, and other workers in the area, followed the *Militant* because of that kind of coverage."

Estrada said that the fight for a union and against the bosses' lawsuit "had a big impact on the dozens of miners involved, including me. I appreciated working and fighting alongside these courageous miners. Our struggle strengthened all of us for future battles we'll be involved in."

"This fight touched many working people around the world," said Alyson Kennedy. "I was able to see that during a speaking tour in New Zealand and Australia in July." Trade unionists and others she met there, as well as in the United States and Canada recently, Kennedy said, had extended solidarity with the union organizing struggle or endorsed the fight to defeat the company's lawsuit.

"Many of them followed the struggle through the *Militant*," she said. "I can think of no better way to put that back paycheck to work than to help the *Militant* keep doing what the paper pledges to be on its masthead: 'A socialist newsweekly published in the interests of working people.'"

Attorneys Randy Dryer and Michael Petrogeorge represented the *Militant* in this successful fight. Dryer and Petrogeorge also represented the Socialist Workers Party, one of the original 120 defendants sued by C.W. Mining and its affiliated International Association of United Workers Union (IAUWU), which Co-Op miners described as a company union.

The SWP and other defendants were dropped when the complaint was amended last year. But until the suit was dismissed, the company could have asked the court at any time to reinstate one or more of these initial defendants.

List of those dismissed

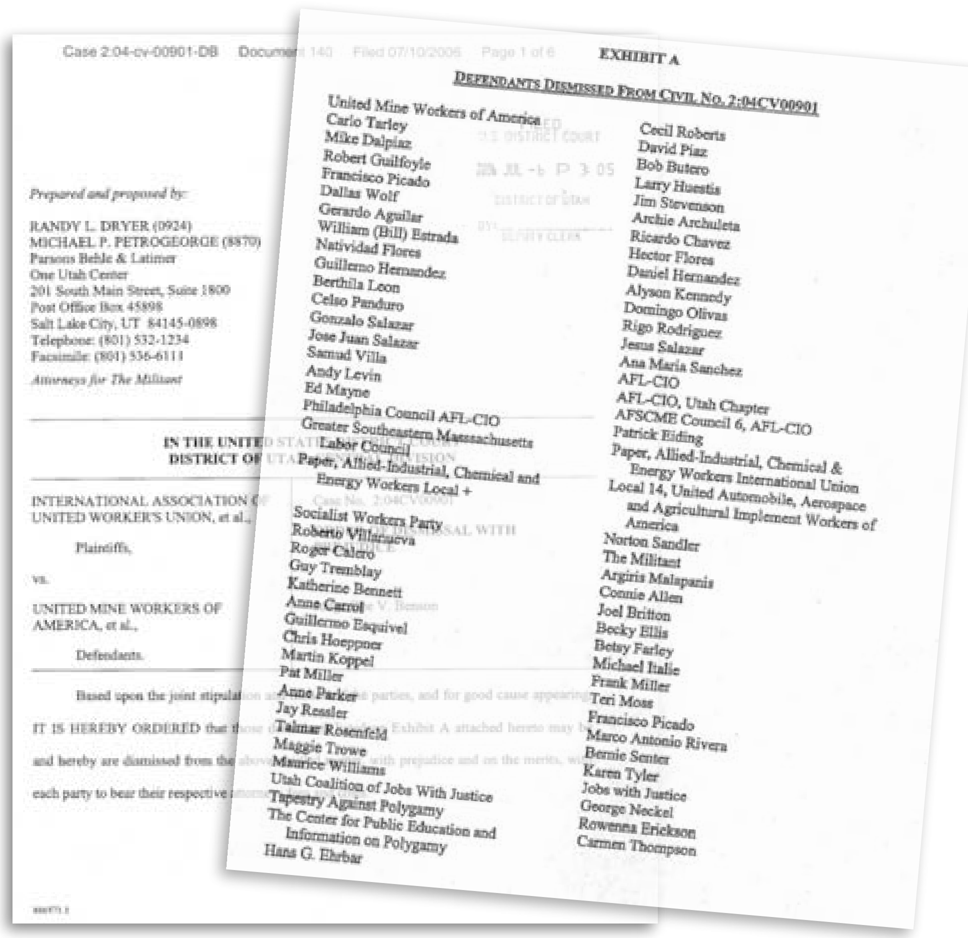
Exhibit A of the court order lists the nearly 80 defendants, including 15 organizations and 62 individuals, released from all claims by C.W. Mining. (Exhibit A appears on this page. It is posted along with the July 6 court order on *www.themilitant.com*.)

Those released include the UMWA and several of its officers; AFL-CIO; Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical & Energy Workers International Union; AFSCME Council 6; United Auto Workers Local 14; Jobs with Justice; 16 miners who helped lead the Co-Op drive; the Socialist Workers Party; Norton Sandler, cited as "a national director of the Socialist Workers 2004 Campaign"; Róger Calero, referred to in the company's brief as a "leader of the Socialist Workers Party"; and the *Militant*, its editor, and a number of individuals who wrote articles for the paper.

Among those dismissed with prejudice by the court were many defendants dropped in the company's amended lawsuit—such as the SWP and unions other than the UMWA listed above. The judge's ruling precludes the company relaunching its case against them too.

C.W. Mining and the IAUWU first filed their civil suit on Sept. 24, 2004, a year after the start of the union-organizing struggle at that mine. (For a summary of central turning points in that struggle see "How Co-Op miners stood up, defeated bosses' retaliatory suit" in the July 3 issue.)

The mine owners and IAUWU cited the UMWA, 16 workers at the mine, the *Militant*, and others with "defamation" and other charges for supporting the organizing struggle and reporting what miners said about seeking union representation to win better wages, safer working conditions, and respect on the job. In later amendments to the suit the mine bosses added further charges.



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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF UTAH

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNITED WORKER'S UNION, et al.,
Plaintiffs,
vs.
UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA, et al.,
Defendants.

Based upon the joint stipulation ... parties, and for good cause appearing
IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that those ... Exhibit A attached hereto may be
and hereby are dismissed from the above ... with prejudice and on the merits, with
each party to bear their respective ...

EXHIBIT A

DEFENDANTS DISMISSED FROM CIVIL NO. 2:04CV00901

United Mine Workers of America	Cecil Roberts
Carlo Tarley	David Piaz
Mike Dalpiaz	Bob Butero
Robert Guilfoyle	Larry Huestis
Francisco Picado	Jim Stevenson
Dallas Wolf	Archie Archuleta
Gerardo Aguilar	Ricardo Chavez
William (Bill) Estrada	Hector Flores
Natividad Flores	Daniel Hernandez
Guillermo Hernandez	Alyson Kennedy
Berthila Leon	Domingo Olivas
Celso Panduro	Rigo Rodriguez
Gonzalo Salazar	Jesus Salazar
Jose Juan Salazar	Ana Maria Sanchez
Samuel Villa	AFL-CIO
Andy Levin	AFL-CIO, Utah Chapter
Ed Mayne	AFSCME Council 6, AFL-CIO
Philadelphia Council AFL-CIO	Patrick Eiding
Greater Southeastern Massachusetts Labor Council	Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical & Energy Workers International Union
Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers Local +	Local 14, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America
Socialist Workers Party	Norton Sandler
Roberto Villanueva	The Militant
Roger Calero	Argiris Malapanis
Guy Tremblay	Connie Allen
Katherine Bennett	Joel Britton
Anne Carrol	Becky Ellis
Guillermo Esquivel	Betsy Farley
Chris Hoeppner	Michael Italie
Martin Koppel	Frank Miller
Pat Miller	Teri Moss
Anne Parker	Francisco Picado
Jay Ressler	Marco Antonio Rivera
Talmar Rosenfeld	Bernie Senter
Maggie Trowe	Karen Tyler
Maurice Williams	Jobs with Justice
Utah Coalition of Jobs With Justice	George Neckel
Tapestry Against Polygamy	Rowenna Erickson
The Center for Public Education and Information on Polygamy	Carmen Thompson
Hans G. Ehrbar	

Background: front page of order signed by Federal Judge Dee Benson in Salt Lake City July 6 dismissing "with prejudice" the lawsuit filed by C.W. Mining. Foreground: Exhibit A of court order, listing all the defendants released from any claims by the company.

The *Militant* was a prominent target of this lawsuit because of our consistent coverage of the Co-Op miners' fight for a union and the editorial support we extended to it. Since September 2003, when the battle for union representation began at this mine near Huntington, Utah, we have published 150 articles and 9 editorials on this labor struggle and events related to it, such as the C.W. Mining lawsuit.

The *Militant* has also gained recognition recently for reporting the facts and backing efforts by miners to organize to enforce safety on the job across the United States and other countries. In response to a sharp jump in killings of U.S. coal miners underground early this year, a front-page editorial in the February 6 issue ran the banner headline, "Unionize the mines! Build the UMWA! No miner has to die! Workers need a union to enforce safety."

"This message has become more urgent as the death toll of coal miners across the country this year reached 36 by last week," said Alyson Kennedy.

Using pen names: a labor right

In the course of this labor rights battle, the *Militant* made a contribution by explaining and defending the use of pen names. It's significant in this light that the list of those Judge Benson dismissed with prejudice from the C.W. Mining suit includes pseudonyms used by Co-Op miners and others in writing articles for the *Militant* on this struggle.

When writing articles about a struggle they're involved in, the Militant said in an editorial in the June 19 issue, "workers often feel the need to use pen names, as did coal miners in Utah who fought to unionize the Co-Op mine.

"In nonunion mines and other workplaces in the United States and elsewhere, workers are often willing to speak out only on condition of anonymity to avoid losing their jobs," we said. "Coal miners interviewed about unsafe conditions in Alabama mines, for example, were quoted anonymously in the *Tuscaloosa News* in February because 'they would face certain punishment or possible termination if they spoke out publicly against their employers.'…

"The labor movement," the *Militant* said, "must defend the right of workers and others to be quoted anonymously or use pseudonyms so they can speak out about dangerous conditions *before* people die on the job. And we must defend the right of pro-labor and other news media to use these practices to protect workers from retribution by the bosses."

Militant Fighting Fund

On Oct. 31, 2004, five weeks after C.W. Mining filed its suit, the *Militant* launched the Militant Fighting Fund. It was established to raise money for the *Militant*'s legal defense and to publicize the stakes for all labor in beating back a lawsuit aimed at shutting up unionists and newspapers that report on and champion the workers' cause.

The fund raised $50,000 within two months and much more in the two years that followed, enabling the *Militant* to retain attorneys and wage a public defense campaign. Volunteers produced a brochure outlining the facts of the case, translated it and other materials into Spanish, French, Swedish, and other languages, and circulated them around the world.

More than 1,000 organizations and individuals endorsed the fund. These include 26 trade union locals, officers of 10 international unions, and nearly 230 officers of union locals.

Lawsuit settled

On May 1, Judge Benson dismissed all charges the company had filed against the 16 Co-Op miners. These included not just the defamation claims but allegations of unfair labor practices, immigration fraud, violation of the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), and civil conspiracy.

"Laborers are entitled to their opinions. They are entitled to express those opinions, whether in the midst of a labor dispute or not," Benson wrote. "Plaintiffs' allegations against the defendant miners seem to be nothing more than an attempt to intimidate their employees and quell honest discussion concerning labor issues."

In the same ruling the judge dismissed the case against Utah's two main dailies, the *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Morning News*. All that remained of C.W. Mining's suit were weak defamation

Continued on page 9



Militant photos by Tamar Rosenfeld

Former Co-Op miners Alyson Kennedy (left) and Bill Estrada (right) signed over to the *Militant* their checks for back pay from Utah mine boss—more than $25,000. They are pictured above with *Militant* editor Argiris Malapanis at June 4 meeting at UMWA District 22 hall in Price, Utah, to celebrate victory in settlement of C.W. Mining suit.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Waste Management strike in N.Y. in its fourth month

NEW YORK—A strike by 115 workers against Waste Management is now into its fourth month. The company, one of the largest private trash collection companies in the area, serves 10,000 businesses. Teamsters Local 813, which represents the striking workers, is fighting company demands that the unionists must start paying for medical care coverage and that overtime no longer be guaranteed for Saturday work, according to a union news release. The previous three-year contract expired November 30. The workers have been on strike since April 3. On June 5 the National Labor Relations Board rejected the union's charges that the company has been involved in unfair labor practices.

—Brian Williams

Flight attendants at Northwest vote again on wage cuts

After rejecting a wage concession package by an 80 percent margin in June, Northwest Airlines flight attendants voted July 6 to switch unions from the Professional Flight Attendants Association (PFAA) to the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), which is affiliated with the Communications Workers of America. The vote was 4,349 for the AFA to 2,668 for the PFAA. AFA officials then announced July 17 that they had reached an agreement with Northwest on a $195 million concession package with deep wage cuts and work rule changes. Flight attendants are now voting on this proposal. Since November, attendants have been working under a 21 percent "temporary" pay cut imposed by Northwest.

—Brian Williams

State report on Sago explosion faults mine seal construction

Another coal miner dies in Kentucky, bringing year's toll in United States to 36

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—A lead investigator into an explosion that killed 12 miners at the Sago Mine in West Virginia in January has said the miners would have survived had seals blocking off an abandoned section of the mine been constructed properly.

Meanwhile, another miner was killed in Kentucky last week, the 13th in that state and 36th nationwide to die on the job so far this year across the United States.

International Coal Group (ICG), which operates the Sago Mine, responded with a statement saying the seals met federal and industry standards.

Federal mine safety officials have since sent a notice to mine operators requiring that mine seals be capable of withstanding an explosion with forces up to 50 pounds per square inch (psi). The previous requirement was 20 psi.

"The fact is the seals did not do what they were supposed to do," said Davitt McAteer at a July 19 press conference to announce the preliminary findings of his investigation, according to Reuters. "These were not explosion-proof [seals]. They were pulverized."

McAteer, former head of the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), was appointed earlier this year by West Virginia governor Joseph Manchin to conduct an "independent investigation" into the explosion that killed 12 miners at the Sago Mine.

"It is important to make a clear distinction between what caused the *explosion* and what caused the *disaster*," the report noted. "There would have been no disaster if the explosion had been contained by the supposedly explosion-proof seals."

On the day the report was issued, ICG released a statement objecting to McAteer's remarks. "ICG believes that the seals were built in compliance with the MSHA-approved plan using construction techniques that are consistent with industry practice," the company said. "Furthermore, ICG believes the physical evidence demonstrates that the explosion forces at the seals significantly exceeded the 20 psi design strength requirement."

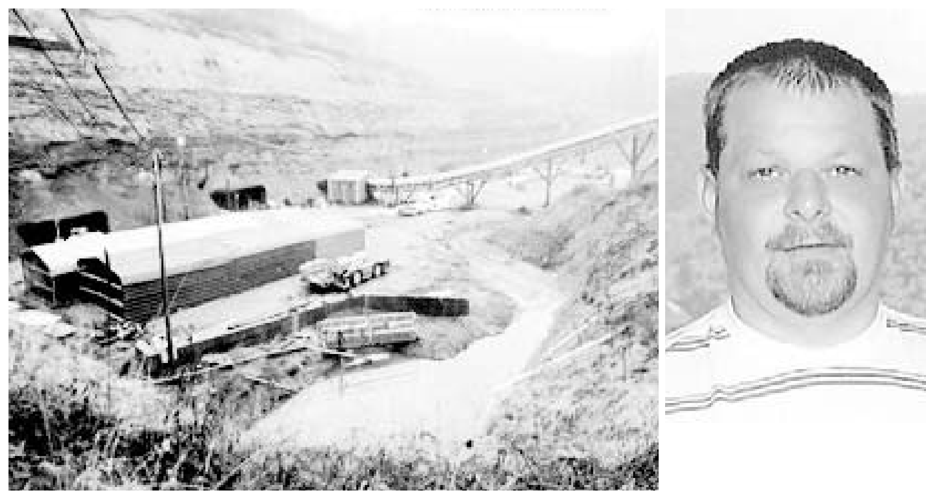
The previous day James Scott, a former construction supervisor for a contractor that built the seals that failed in the Sago Mine, said they were constructed in the cheapest way. Scott later got a job in the mine. He said that after he became a Sago employee a supervisor got him to sign a false declaration saying that he had received safety training, according to a UPI dispatch.

Until 1992 seals were made of concrete blocks. That year MSHA approved the use of a lighter and cheaper foam-type material called Omega Blocks. Although they are rated to withstand 20 psi, the blocks failed both in the Sago explosion and in a May 20 blast near Harlan, Kentucky, that killed five miners.

The report also cites the failure of the mine's "outmoded" phone system making it impossible to communicate with the trapped miners; the absence of a gas chromatograph that would have more accurately determined whether there was a fire in the mine; the absence of seismic equipment that could have pinpointed the location of the miners; and the failure of at least four of the emergency air packs the miners were carrying.

Randal McCloy, the sole survivor of the explosion, said in a letter to the deceased miners' families that four of their emergency air packs failed. According to press reports, one of the miners was carrying an expired air pack. ICG said it was the result of a typographical error. On July 7 Kentucky mine safety officials announced that 119 air packs being used in the state's mines had failed a random inspection.

The report did not give a cause for the explosion and concluded that it could not be attributed "to any specific actions" on the part ICG, MSHA, or the state mine safety agency. It recommended improvement of communications and tracking equipment, improving emergency air packs, and construction of reinforced emergency shelters with extended air, water, and food supplies.



Left: Sago Mine, owned by International Coal Group, where 12 miners were killed after a January 2 explosion trapped them underground. Right: John May, 39, who was killed on the job July 18 in eastern Kentucky while operating road-grader machine.

Also on July 19, MSHA issued a bulletin sent to underground bituminous coal mine operators, contractors, mine health and safety enforcement personnel, and manufacturers of mine seals. The notice requires that future seals constructed with alternative materials must be capable of withstanding an explosion force of 50 psi.

The bulletin notes that requirements for seal strength in most other coal-producing countries exceeds 20 psi.

❖

Another miner was killed on the job in Pike County in eastern Kentucky July 20, bringing this year's national death total to 36 coal miners. John May, 39, was operating a road-grader machine at the Slate Branch Mine in Freeburn, Kentucky. He was alongside the grader "when it rolled backwards, down a steeply inclined road, and struck him," reported the *Appalachian News-Express*. The surface mine is owned by Central Appalachian Mining LLC of Pikeville.

May had 20 years' mining experience and had returned to work at the company just three months earlier. MSHA has cited the mine 16 times this year for safety violations. Most recently, in April the federal agency cited the mine for unsafe equipment, an accumulation of combustible materials, and unclear travelways.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

August 7, 1981

There has been a massive response to the AFL-CIO's call for a September 19 "Solidarity Day" in Washington, D.C.

Since the action was announced seven weeks ago, union after union has pledged an all-out effort. So have the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), National Urban League, National Organization for Women, Coalition of Labor Union Women, Operation PUSH, National Council of Churches, League of United Latin American Citizens, and others.

"It is time to stand up and stop the dismantling of forty years of social progress," declared Lloyd McBride, president of the United Steelworkers and one of the action's coordinators.

Calling Solidarity Day "an important part of what must be a continuing campaign by labor and our allies," McBride urged all USWA locals to mobilize their members.

August 6, 1956

AUGUST 1—Millions of Arabs throughout the Middle East demonstrated their hatred of British, American and French Imperialism by turning out in unprecedented demonstrations to cheer the Egyptian nationalization of the Suez Canal this week. A crowd of "hundreds of thousands went wild with enthusiasm" as they heard Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser announce the nationalization of the world's busiest waterway at the end of a three-hour speech in Alexandria July 26. This was Egypt's reply to withdrawal by the United States, Britain, and the U.S. controlled World Bank of offers to aid in the construction of the vital Aswan Dam.

When Nasser returned to Cairo by rail after making the announcement, enthusiastic crowds of Egyptians lined the tracks along the route. In the capital itself more hundreds of thousands greeted Nasser with, in the words of the New York Times' correspondent: "an almost hysterical hero's welcome."

August 8, 1931

Hardly ten days have passed since the announcement of the Hoover moratorium and already a violent accentuation of the political and economic crisis in Germany has manifested itself. All the prophecies of the bourgeois and social democratic press on the advent of a new era—diminution of the economic crisis and a new rise in a short time—not only in Germany, but throughout the world, have vanished.

The crash of one of the largest banks—the Danat—gave the signal to the financial bankruptcy of Germany. All the attempts of the Bruening government to stop the financial catastrophe by international loans have up to now had no success. The French bourgeoisie, which has deliberately prolonged the negotiations on the moratorium in order to deliver a heavy blow to the German bourgeoisie in exchange for the suspension of reparations payments, is obviously far from ready to consent to loans to Germany without political guarantees.

Tel Aviv widens invasion of Lebanon

Continued from front page

agreement on such a deployment. Many have stated their support for some kind of "peacekeeping" force.

Israeli forces have killed nearly 400 in Lebanon and driven more than 600,000 people from their homes since the assault began two weeks ago. Tel Aviv aims to crush Hezbollah, a Lebanese group that organized armed resistance to an earlier Israeli occupation of the country. Hezbollah militias captured two Israeli soldiers, killed three, and wounded two in a July 12 attack, which the Israeli rulers used as the pretext for their assault.

Outrage among working people worldwide over the devastation of Lebanon has been reflected in a growing number of protests, from predominantly Arab countries to North America and within Israel itself. More than 2,500 marched in Tel Aviv July 22 calling for a halt to the war on Lebanon. (See article below.)

Washington—the Israeli rulers' most powerful patron—continues to provide political backing for the assault and has moved to rapidly resupply the Israeli war machine. The July 22 *New York Times* reported that the U.S. government "is rushing a delivery of precision-guided bombs to Israel." The weaponry is central to the aerial assault of the Israeli air force, whose officials said Tel Aviv's fighter jets dropped 23 tons of explosives three days earlier on Beirut alone.

In the days leading up to the ground invasion, Israeli forces dropped flyers over southern Lebanon telling the civilian population to flee the area. But the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) has bombed hundreds of the roads and bridges that would make escape possible. The London *Financial Times* reported July 25, for example, that the main highway between the southern city of Sidon and Beirut further north was made impassable by an Israeli missile barrage on the first day of the war.

Even when Lebanese left the center of the war zone they were far from safe. With an estimated 40,000 refugees in a city of 100,000, Sidon itself came under attack from fighter-bombers for the first time on July 23.

"For Israel, there are no longer civilians in southern Lebanon," said Israel's justice minister, Haim Ramon.

'Destroy the infrastructure'

In the early days of the assault, the IDF sent small groups of soldiers into southern Lebanon for short-term operations while it massed equipment and troops on the border. Israel's defense minister, Amir Peretz, announced that his troops would establish an occupation over a section of Lebanese territory. "We are shaping it, but you can't draw a single line that will become a permanent line along the entire zone," he said. Israeli forces occupied a 15-mile-deep area there from 1982 to 2000.

As the ground offensive began Tel Aviv called up 5,000 reservists into active duty.

The Israeli army reportedly overran the Lebanese village of Maroun al-Ras July 22–23, about a mile from the border. Since that time it has been engaged in combat with Lebanese fighters for control over the larger city of Bint Jbail, with a population of 200,000.

The IDF is using an intense artillery barrage to conquer Bint Jbail. The Israeli commander of an artillery battalion told the *Jerusalem Post* July 25 that cannons from his unit in northern Israel had fired 3,000 shells at the city in the last few days. "The operation in Bint Jbail, initially slated to take 48–72 hours, would last as long as necessary to kill all the Hizbullah terrorists and destroy the infrastructure," the *Post* reported from Israeli military officials.

The Israeli assault began July 13 with artillery fire, air strikes, and a naval bombardment of southern Lebanon. Israeli forces then imposed a sea, air, and naval blockade of the country, with continued bombardments of predominantly Shiite sections of Beirut and southern Lebanon, and assassination attempts against Hezbollah officials.

Hezbollah has fired more than 2,000 rockets into northern Israel since the Israeli attack began. One-third of the area's 2 million residents have fled, the *Wall Street Journal* reported July 24, and "Haifa now resembles a ghost town." The Haifa port, one of the country's two busiest, has been shut down for a week. About 40 Israelis have died in the attacks.

'Strategic opening' for imperialism

From the first day of the assault Washington brushed aside calls by the Lebanese government and others to press the Israeli rulers to halt their attacks and establish a cease-fire. "I believe sovereign nations have the right to defend their people from terrorist attack, and to take the necessary action to prevent those attacks," U.S. president George Bush said in a July 22 radio address.

The same day the *New York Times* reported that the White House had signed off on a rush shipment of precision-guided bombs to Tel Aviv. "An arms-sale package approved last year provides authority for Israel to purchase from the United States as many as 100 GBU-28's, which are 5,000-pound laser-guided bombs," the *Times* reported. "The package also provides for selling satellite-guided missiles."

While in Israel July 25, U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice said she supported an end to the fighting, but only once there is a way "to deal with the causes of extremism."

Governments in the Middle East have adopted a range of views, from criticism of the "extremism" of Hezbollah to condemnation of the Israeli assault.

On July 19 Iraq's prime minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki said, "The Israeli attacks and air strikes are completely destroying Lebanon's infrastructure. I condemn these aggressions and call on the Arab League foreign ministers' meeting in Cairo to take quick action to stop these aggressions."

At that summit, however, Saudi foreign minister Prince Saud al-Faisal placed at least equal blame on Hezbollah. He said the group's actions "will pull the whole region back to years ago, and we cannot accept them."

A July 24 *Wall Street Journal* editorial titled, "Condi's Mideast Mission," notes that the blows Tel Aviv is landing against Hezbollah could create a "strategic opening" for U.S. imperialist interests in the region. "The opportunity is to degrade Hezbollah and further isolate Syria and Iran," it said, referring to the governments that have backed Hezbollah.

In September 2004 Washington and Paris jointly sponsored a resolution passed by the United Nations Security Council that called for the disarming of Hezbollah and the withdrawal of the 14,000 Syrian troops from Lebanon. The following spring Damascus pulled out its forces as the result of both imperialist pressure and mass protests demanding an end to its decades-long intervention in Lebanon.

Now Tel Aviv and the U.S. rulers seek to press their advantage against Tehran and Damascus, as well as Hezbollah, a capitalist party that calls for an "Islamic Republic." The group gained popular support for playing a leading role in the resistance to the Israeli occupation. It now holds 14 out of 128 seats in the Lebanese parliament, and two seats in the cabinet.

Responding to a proposal floated by various governments and UN secretary general Kofi Annan for an "international" military force to police southern Lebanon, the *Wall Street Journal* editors rejected the idea of anything modeled on the 2,000-troop UN force that has been in the area for 28 years. On the other hand, said the big-business daily, "an international force inserted after Israel finishes cutting Hezbollah down to size" could take advantage of "an opening to disarm Hezbollah, and isolate Iran."

Opinions in Lebanon on such a force vary. "There is confusion about the role of the proposed multinational 'peace' force for the south," Bashar Abu-Sayfan, a Palestinian refugee in Beirut told the *Militant*. "In my neighborhood most would say that it is a good step, that it will stop the fighting and get rid of the problem by reigning in Hezbollah. Others, like myself, are saying they have come before and we have seen their true colors. They will not come to help us."

Meanwhile, the IDF attack on the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip that began June 25 goes on without a stop. The *Jerusalem Post* reported July 26 on a new assault on northern Gaza in which 20 Palestinians were killed. Some 50 tanks entered Gaza and in eight strikes overnight "Israeli aircraft blasted several houses of Hamas and Islamic Jihad operatives," according to the *Post*. In similar strikes over the last two years Tel Aviv has assassinated much of the leadership of Hamas, the governing party in the Palestinian National Authority.

Georges Mehrabian in Athens, Greece, contributed to this article.

20,000 rally in Sydney against Israeli assaults



SYDNEY, Australia—Some 20,000 protesters, mainly from the large Lebanese-Australian community here, mobilized July 22 against the Israeli assaults on Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, bringing the main street and mall of Sydney to a standstill. The spirited march then rallied outside the U.S. consulate displaying photos of civilian casualties in Lebanon. Among the banners were, "We are not terrorists, we are being terrorised." The many youthful protesters chanted "Stop the killing, Stop the war," with many waving Lebanese and Palestinian flags. Some also displayed Australian flags handed out by organizers in response to rightist claims that Lebanese immigrants were not "Australians." The same day, 5,000 rallied in Melbourne.

—JOANNE KUNIANSKY

Thousands join protests against Israeli assault in Lebanon

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—Protests against the Israeli military assault in Lebanon have taken place around the world, including in the United Kingdom, Germany, Greece, Sweden, Egypt, Yemen, Israel, Jordan, Australia, New Zealand, and many others countries. The actions were often joined by large numbers of people of Lebanese origin, as well as others outraged by the actions of the Israeli government.

Protests in Europe included 11 rallies across the United Kingdom organized by the Stop The War Coalition and the Muslim Association of Britain. Organizers estimated that 20,000 took part in a rally in London outside the U.S. embassy.

In Sweden, some 2,000 people marched on the Israeli embassy in Stockholm. Thousands marched through the streets of Berlin carrying Lebanese, Palestinian, Iranian, and Syrian flags, Reuters reported.

Protests were planned in up to 20 cities in Canada. An estimated 4,000–5,000 people rallied in Toronto. Many of the speakers and those carrying signs mocked Prime Minister Stephen Harper's remark that Israel's attack on Lebanon was a "measured response."

Thousands also rallied across the Middle East. The protest of 2,000 in Amman was organized by the Muslim Brotherhood, Jordan's main opposition party. Police attacked demonstrators at a mosque in Cairo when they attempted to take to the streets. In Sudan, 1,000 people rallied following Friday prayers July 21 in the capital Khartoum. The protest was organized by former prime minister Sadiq al-Mahdi.

In Libya some 4,000 participated in a march in Tripoli in support of Hezbollah.

About 20,000 rallied in Sydney, Australia, July 22 (see photo story above).

The third and largest protest in Israel occurred July 22 when thousands turned out in Tel Aviv, the Israeli daily *Yediot Ahronoth* reported. Marchers chanted, "Olmert and Bush have struck a deal—to carry on with the occupation," and "Children in Beirut and Haifa want to go on living."

New York SWP campaign

Continued from front page

and profit-motivated decisions, like the refusal to invest adequately in maintenance and new power plants. Those decisions by the capitalists guarantee there will be more disastrous breakdowns."

Koppel said the nationalized energy companies "must be operated under workers' control on the job—control over the pace of production, over how the job is organized, over the safety of workers and the public at large."

The Socialist Workers Party campaign, he said, is calling for a massive public works program to rebuild the deteriorating infrastructure and create thousands of needed jobs.

These proposals are part of the election platform that socialist campaigners have been taking to working people across the state. By today, campaigners had successfully completed a two-week effort to collect 30,000 signatures—twice the required number—to win ballot status for the SWP ticket in New York State.

The Socialist Workers candidates are Róger Calero for U.S. Senate, Maura DeLuca for governor, Ben O'Shaughnessy for lieutenant governor, Martín Koppel for state attorney general, Willie Cotton for state comptroller, and Nancy Boyasko for U.S. Congress in the 11th District.

Boyasko, Calero, and Koppel spoke at a campaign rally hosted by the Militant Labor Forum in Manhattan on July 22 to celebrate the accomplishments of the ballot drive here. The panel included Osborne Hart and Diana Newberry, SWP candidates for governor of Pennsylvania and Iowa, respectively, and Marshall Lambie of the Young Socialists.

Visiting Woodside the next day, Koppel and a team of socialist campaigners spoke with dozens of people standing in line to receive bags of ice and meals at a relief station set up by Con Edison and the Red Cross. Resident after angry resident described the conditions they have confronted during the blackout, as they signed petitions to put the Socialist Workers ticket on the ballot.

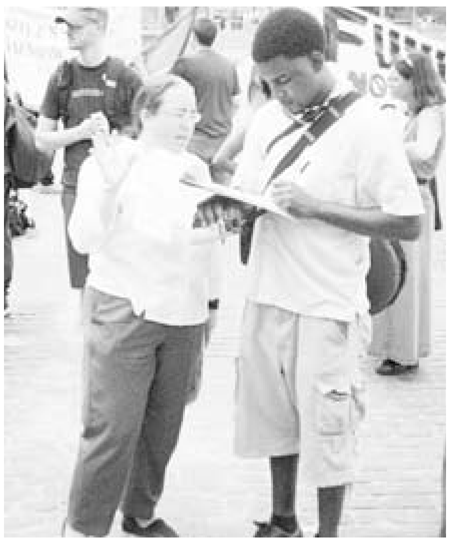
"We've been without power for six days now. Yesterday was the first day these people showed up in our neighborhood with water, ice, and food," Marcelo Cruz, a restaurant worker, told Koppel. "For five days last week I had to take a taxi to work in Manhattan because the subways weren't running in this area."

"This is an outrage. It's pure negligence by Con Ed and the city," said Antonia González. "After a week without power, my kitchen stinks from the spoiled food. There's no air conditioning. The elevators aren't running. Yesterday the lights came back on and I bought groceries—but then we lost power and I had to throw out the food again. And after they fix the blackout, I'm sure they'll increase the rates, which are too high already."

"Who keeps receipts for the food they bought?" asked María Montes, a house cleaner, referring to the utility's offer to reimburse families for loss of perishables if they showed receipts or food labels. In addition, many small businesses lost thousands of dollars in ruined goods.

Six days into the blackout, hundreds of thousands remained without power in northwest Queens, including Astoria, Sunnyside, Hunters Point, Long Island City, and Ditmars. The blackout began July 17 at the height of a heat wave, when 10 of the 22 main power feeders in the area broke down. Con Ed decided to keep the power running through lower-voltage cables, which then burned out, according to company officials. The utility has refused to explain the cause of the breakdown.





Militant photos by Eli Green (left) and Ted Leonard (right)

Left: Diana Newberry, SWP candidate for governor of Iowa, speaks at July 22 socialist campaign rally in New York. In Iowa, drive to collect 2,500 signatures to put SWP ticket on ballot starts July 29 and goes to August 6. To help petition call (515) 255-1707. Right: Laura Garza, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in 8th C.D. in Massachusetts, campaigns at July 21 protest in Boston against Israeli assault on Lebanon. Supporters have collected 3,640 signatures toward goal of 4,000 to place Garza on ballot.

A group of workers standing in the food line, originally from Tibet, asked Koppel about the socialist election platform. The demand for nationalizing the energy industry, he said, is part of a broader approach that the union movement must take up in defense of the needs of all working people.

"The energy question can't be seen as a local or American problem—it's a world problem," Koppel said. "Two billion people in the world lack access to electric power. The U.S. government tries to prevent Iran and other nations from developing nuclear power and other energy sources they need. Our campaign stands with the oppressed nations in opposing these imperialist attacks, and in any effort to make economic and social advances. That's the position the labor movement in this country should take."

The workers were interested in this world approach and several signed the petition to put the SWP ticket on the ballot. Many other workers who signed, hailing from countries such as Nepal, Korea, Pakistan, and Mexico, referred to their own experience with conditions of imperialist-imposed underdevelopment. Some, hesitant to sign at first, grabbed a pen after they began to discuss with the socialist campaigners the recent big demonstrations for legalization of all immigrants and the impact of these mobilizations on U.S. politics.

Rosa Gaguancela, who cleans houses and, as a recent garment worker, is a member of UNITE HERE, said she had attended the May 1 immigrant rights demonstration in New York. She has also helped organize other workers to join similar protests in Paterson, New Jersey, and Washington, D.C. "We have to keep up this struggle. Workers need to get their papers," she said.

Florida town rejects anti-immigrant law

Continued from page 3

1,400 acres around Avon Park, read a resolution passed by the Highlands County Citrus Growers Association opposing the measure. He said, "Without the Mexican population we would be out of business." The local Chamber of Commerce has campaigned against the ordinance and sent representatives such as local landlords and businessmen to voice their opposition.

Christine Moorer, who spent a lifetime working in the fields and is now disabled, said early in the evening, "I don't mind if immigrants come, but come legal," a sentiment echoed by others.

Later in the hearing, Lillie Hilton said to applause, "I have no cows and no groves—I am here not for myself but for the human heart. This law is not the answer. What do you want, to send us all back on the boat? This reminds me of what they said about Blacks."

Eric Simpson, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in Florida's 17th Congressional District, also took the floor at the hearing. "The U.S. constitution said slavery was legal and those who escaped were 'illegals,'" he said. "It took a civil war to make *slavery* illegal, and then the civil rights revolution to end Jim Crow segregation in the South. Today, we are seeing the birth of a new proletarian movement for the legalization of immigrants that has strengthened the working class and the labor movement." The proposed ordinance would be a blow to this working-class movement and should be defeated, he said.





Militant photos by Bernie Senter

Left: Eric Simpson, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in Florida's District 17, speaks July 24 at Avon Park city council meeting where anti-immigrant ordinance was voted down. Right: protest against ordinance there the previous day.

Most of those protesting outside were vocal against the ordinance. Two construction workers who are Black saw the protest and joined in. "It's affecting all of us," said Arkeen Watson, 22. "They aren't taking jobs. Immigrant workers need to live, too."

Cheers erupted in the community center when the measure was voted down. Chants of *Sí se pudo* (Yes we did!), "Hell no, they won't go!" and "USA, USA" caught on outside as immigrant rights supporters celebrated the victory.

Socialist Workers Party candidates in 2006

Florida	Bernie Senter, U.S. Senate Omari Musa, Governor Margaret Trowe, U.S. Cong., 18th CD Eric Simpson, U.S. Cong., 17th CD Ruth Robinett, Fl. State Rep. Dist. 109
Iowa	Diana Newberry, Governor Kevin Dwire, Lt. Governor Frank Forrestal, Sec'y of Agriculture Helen Meyers, U.S. Cong., 3rd CD
Massachusetts	John Hawkins, Governor Laura Garza, U.S. Cong., 8th CD
Minnesota	Rebecca Williamson, U.S. Senate Brian Taylor, Governor Nelson Gonzalez, Lt. Governor Tom Fiske, U.S. Cong., 4th CD Julian Santana, U.S. Cong., 5th CD
New Jersey	Angela Lariscy, U.S. Senate* Brian Williams, U.S. Cong., 13th CD*
New York	Róger Calero, U.S. Senate Maura DeLuca, Governor Ben O'Shaughnessy, Lt. Governor Martín Koppel, State Attorney General Willie Cotton, State Comptroller Nancy Boyasko, U.S. Cong., 11th CD
Pennsylvania	Ved Dookhun, U.S. Senate Osborne Hart, Governor Tony Lane, Lt. Governor Cindy Jaquith, U.S. Cong., 14th CD John Staggs, Pa. State Rep. Dist. 198
Texas	Amanda Ulman, U.S. Senate José Aravena, Governor Anthony Dutrow, U.S. Cong., 18th CD
Washington	David Rosenfeld, U.S. Senate Connie Allen, U.S. Cong., 7th CD
Wash., D.C.	Sam Manuel, Mayor Seth Dellinger, City Council At-Large Janice Lynn, House Delegate

*Confirmed on ballot

Pennsylvania SWP campaign

Continued from front page
deputy chief counsel, notified attorney Eric Lieberman of this decision today. Lieberman, of the noted New York City constitutional law firm Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky, and Lieberman, is representing the Pennsylvania Socialist Workers campaign in challenging the oath.

Lieberman had notified state authorities that the SWP campaign would file suit in Philadelphia on Thursday, July 27, to strike down the "anti-subversive" pledge. Lieberman told state authorities his clients would seek a restraining order to prevent them from requiring Staggs to sign the pledge when filing nominating petitions July 31 to be placed on the November ballot.

"Since 1951, when the Pennsylvania Loyalty Act was passed," Staggs said, "this oath has been a danger to the political rights of every working person, to the union movement, and to all defenders of free speech. We've won a victory in defense of workers fighting to organize and strengthen the unions as well as those advocating change—including revolutionary change—in the government."

Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers candidate for Pennsylvania governor, told the *Militant* that the capitalist government in Pennsylvania has sought "to keep restrictions like this in place today as they prepare to meet worker and farmer resistance to assaults on our wages and conditions, on and off the job. The wealthy rulers were surprised this spring by the massive working-class mobilizations for immigrant rights, including the first nationwide general political strike in U.S. history. Today's blow against continued use of the loyalty oath removes an anti-working-class arrow from the quiver of the employing class.

"It will encourage all those, like our campaign, who are fighting to overturn the anti-working-class 'Illegal Immigration Relief Act,' passed recently by the city council in Hazleton," said Hart.

1974 U.S. Supreme Court ruling

"The loyalty oath is a remnant of a terrible chapter in American history, when citizens who registered even the slightest dissent from American policies and practices risked accusations of disloyalty and attendant loss of civil liberties and employment," attorney Eric Lieberman told the *Militant*. "After years of legal and political struggle, the Supreme Court recognized in a series of decisions from the mid-1960s through the Whitcomb decision in 1974 that use of such oaths violated the First Amendment rights of all people in this country."

Lieberman was referring to the 1974 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Communist Party of Indiana vs. Whitcomb* that declared the loyalty oath requirement unconstitutional. In 1975 the State Attorney General issued a formal opinion that its loyalty oath for state employees, which is identical to the current Candidate's Affidavit, would no longer be enforced. Nonetheless, officials in some states continued to require the oath for those running for public office.

Getting rid of the loyalty oath is not just a question affecting socialist candidates, Staggs pointed out. "It makes it easier for working people to use the ballot to advance their struggles, without facing a political litmus test," he said. "It's a victory for all."

Pennsylvania official Louis Boyle informed Lieberman that the Department of State had received a communication from the Attorney General's office July 25 saying, "This will confirm that the Whitcomb decision controls the constitutionality of the loyalty oath for candidates for public office in PA. Accordingly, the Department of State should discontinue use of the oath unless and until the Whitcomb decision is overturned."

"We are particularly pleased that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has acknowledged that the loyalty oath is unconstitutional in today's climate," Lieberman said. "We hope this will encourage similar action by those few additional states that retain some version of these odious oaths."

This victory is a product of more than a year of struggle, said Hart. This includes the successful campaign last year by supporters of Jay Ressler, the SWP candidate for Pittsburgh mayor. City authorities put Ressler on the ballot despite his refusal to sign the oath and the public campaign by his supporters opposing it.

Petitioning effort

The 2006 SWP ticket in Pennsylvania also includes Ved Dookhun for U.S. Senate, Anthony Lane for Lt. Governor, and Cynthia Jaquith for U.S. Congress in the Pittsburgh-area 14th Congressional District.

The Socialist Workers campaign began a weeklong petitioning effort July 22 to put Staggs, a packinghouse worker in Philadelphia, on the ballot. Campaign supporters plan to gather at least 1,500 signatures—more than three times the requirement. In the first two days of petitioning, 1,156 people in the Germantown area signed up.



Militant/Marty Ressler

Jay Ressler (center), Socialist Workers Party candidate for Pittsburgh mayor last year, at July 20, 2005, press conference after filing petitions for ballot status.

"We are campaigning to advance support for workers' struggles to organize unions and use them to defend themselves and other working people from the bosses' attacks, and for immediate legalization of all immigrant workers," said Hart. "We've gotten a good response to the socialist campaign platform, including the demands for immediate withdrawal of U.S. and all 'coalition' troops from Iraq and Afghanistan, and an end to the murderous assault by Tel Aviv, with Washington's support, against the people of Lebanon and Palestinians in the Gaza Strip."

One worker who signed said he wanted some help organizing a union at the trucking company where he works. Campaigners agreed to help out and explained that Staggs himself is involved in a union-organizing effort at the Mopac meatpacking plant where he works.

Several working people who signed petitions over the July 22–23 weekend read the loyalty oath, which campaigners had with them, and many were outraged. A couple of signers volunteered to help in the campaign to get it overturned.

Aquisha Marrero, who came to the United States from Cuba, signed the petition, saying she was opposed to the U.S. government's economic war against Cuba.

"A central demand of our campaign is to end Washington's cold war against Cuba and to keep U.S. hands off Venezuela too," responded Hart.

When asked if she had attended any of the recent mobilizations for immigrant rights, Marrero said, "I went to all of them. If you don't have anything to fight for, you don't have anything to live for."

For more information on inviting the socialists candidates to speak, campaigning with them, or making a financial contribution to the SWP campaign, contact the Pennsylvania Socialist Workers 2006 Campaign Committee, 188 W. Wyoming Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19140; Tel: (215) 455-2682; E-mail: paswp2006campaign @verizon.net.

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STATEMENT BY SWP CANDIDATES

Nationalize the energy industry!

The following statement was issued July 25 by Róger Calero and Maura DeLuca, the Socialist Workers Party candidates for U.S. Senate and governor of New York, respectively.

In response to the weeklong blackout in Queens, New York, as well as the power outages in St. Louis and California, our campaign calls for the nationalization of the U.S. energy industry. We say: take these profit-driven companies out of private hands and run them as a public utility for the benefit of the majority, with workers controlling production. Launch a massive public works program to rebuild the infrastructure and create thousands of jobs.

In Queens, Con Edison and City Hall have shown callous indifference to the conditions facing more than 100,000 people day after day, with no lights or air conditioning, spoiled food, elevators stalled, and stores and restaurants shut down. What was termed an "inconvenience" by Con Ed and "annoying" by Mayor Michael Bloomberg are conditions that hit working people the hardest and endanger the health and safety of the ill and elderly.

At the height of a heat wave, 10 of 22 main feeder lines in the area broke down and the utility decided to keep power running through lower-voltage cables, which burned out. The problem highlighted the company's refusal to do necessary maintenance on deteriorating cables and other infrastructure or to expand electrical capacity to meet growing demand. Why? Because it's not profitable enough for Con Ed's wealthy owners. Yet electricity rates keep rising. And, compounding the national energy crisis, gasoline prices have surpassed a record $3 a gallon.

This is not a technical issue but a political one. The problem is that Con Edison is in business to make profits, not to provide a socially necessary service. And its profit-based decisions only guarantee more blackouts and breakdowns affecting millions. The latest debacle follows the big power outages in Manhattan's Washington Heights in 1999 and throughout the Northeast in 2003, as well as the recurring energy crisis in California.

The calls for more "regulation" and "oversight," proposed by various capitalist politicians, are sham solutions that cover up the root problem: private ownership of an industry that is vital to meeting people's needs but criminally incapable of doing so.

To ensure reliable and affordable power for all, the labor movement should demand that the federal government nationalize the energy industry. A fight toward such a goal must include opening the books of these trusts—gaining knowledge for the working class and public at large about everything that big business and the capitalist government hide from us. The workers can shine a spotlight on "business secrets," the behind-the-scenes deals and swindles, including how the rulers' wars affect us. The labor movement can be mobilized to expose contrived shortages and hidden stockpiles, to get at the truth behind the disastrous breakdowns inflicted on the population under capitalism.

The nationalized energy companies must be run under workers' control. This includes not just public exposure of their books, but actual control on the job—over the pace of production, over how the job is organized, and over safety at work and for the broader public. Doing so also becomes a school for the working class in preparing to manage and plan the entire economy under a workers and farmers government.

The Socialist Workers Party campaign also calls for a massive public works program to meet pressing needs, including the rebuilding of deteriorated infrastructure, and to create thousands of jobs at union-scale wages.

To wage a successful fight around such demands, labor cannot remain subordinated to the twin capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans. We need our own party—a labor party, based on the unions—that will champion the interests of all working people. The recent mobilizations and political strikes by millions of workers demanding legalization of all immigrants offer a glimpse of the power that could be unleashed by organizing such a party.

Working people need to approach access to energy from the standpoint of the world, not a narrow New York or U.S. framework. The energy industry is controlled by monopolies with an international reach. At the same time, one-third of the world's people lack modern sources of energy. Labor must oppose the drive by Washington and other imperialist powers to block oppressed nations, from Iran to Bolivia, from developing nuclear power and other energy sources needed to make economic and social advances and bring much of humanity out of darkness.

Defeat of coal bosses' suit is gain for workers

Continued from page 4

allegations against the UMWA, Utah Jobs with Justice, and the *Militant.*

The National Labor Relations Board had also issued a preliminary finding declaring that the company had fired the miners for union activity—despite the bosses' claim that the workers were dismissed because they were undocumented. The federal labor board had set a date for a hearing on that finding.

Combined with the NLRB's determination, the May 1 court decision was especially damaging to the company.

Coming amid massive working-class mobilizations for immigrant rights this year, the ruling registered the fact that the 75 miners, most of whom are immigrants from Mexico, and who waged a 10-month-long strike for union representation, had stood off the bosses again. (See "We won battle at Co-Op mine due to strength of our fight and solidarity" in June 5 issue.)

A few weeks after the May 1 ruling, C.W. Mining agreed to drop the lawsuit against the remaining defendants and settle with the UMWA and fired Co-Op miners. Six workers, including Estrada and Kennedy, were awarded back pay.

The victory registered in defeating this harassment lawsuit—one of the most important labor defense cases in many years—is a cause for celebration by all working people.

LETTERS

Chicago transit accident

On July 11 the last car of an eight-car train derailed in a tunnel under the central city area of Chicago igniting a fire. About 1,000 people had to be evacuated. While most escaped unharmed, three were hospitalized.

Rick Harris, president of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 308, which organizes transit workers here, said the reason delays occurred in the evacuation was the Chicago Transit Authority's (CTA) reduction from two- to one-man train crews.

Frank Kreusi, head of the CTA, responded that all major U.S. transit systems now run with one-man crews. That may be true but it only means all transit systems, not just Chicago, are guilty of trying to balance budgets on the backs of passenger safety.

John Votava
Chicago, Illinois

Chicago transit II

On July 11, when an accident occurred in the Chicago subway, the first thought on many peoples' minds and in the news media was that it was a terrorist attack. But this time the "terrorists" were the capitalists for neglecting safety, as they let tracks, trains and equipment deteriorate to save money.

A similar accident happened here in the Stockholm Metro about a year ago, when an older model train caught fire in a tunnel.

Per Leander
Stockholm, Sweden

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Washington, Tokyo push 'missile defense'

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The testing of seven ballistic missiles July 4–5 by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has been seized upon by Washington to deepen its imperialist military alliance with Japan.

The two governments have expanded their co-operation in establishing a nuclear umbrella that would give Washington and Tokyo nuclear first-strike capability against their adversaries in the region. Washington has the largest nuclear arsenal in the world and, according to a Japanese defense official quoted in *Forbes* magazine, Japan has the technology in place to have its own nuclear arsenal within about six months.

"Japan is a heavy user of nuclear power and has reprocessing plans for mixed uranium-plutonium oxide that can produce weapons grade plutonium," *Investor's Business Daily* reported July 12, and "is believed to have a stockpile of separated plutonium of 45 tons—enough for 9,000 nuclear weapons."

Despite constitutional restrictions imposed on a defeated Japan after World War II that restricted the use of Japanese military force abroad, Tokyo maintains an army with 240,000 troops. The Japanese government has steadily increased the offensive capabilities of its military, deploying 1,000 troops to Iraq in 2004 in the Japanese army's first overseas combat mission since World War II.

The Japanese government seeks to include "preemptive strikes" as part of the constitutional definition of "self-defense." Referring to north Korea, the Japanese government's chief cabinet secretary, Shinzo Abe, said, "There is the view that attacking the launch base of the guided missiles is within the constitutional right of self-defense." This view was echoed by top military officials.

Worldwide, Washington—the only government ever to use nuclear weapons in warfare—maintains "thousands of nuclear-missile warheads mounted atop 500 silo-based Minuteman III ICBM's and aboard 14 Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines," reported the *Defense News.*

While maintaining this arsenal, the Pentagon spends nearly $10 billion a year developing a missile shield that would allow it to use these weapons without facing a nuclear reprisal.

The ground-based Midcourse Missile Defense System was begun in 1998 under the Clinton administration. It is based on nine interceptor missiles in Fort Greely, Alaska, and two in Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. The sea-based missile shield includes "at least one ship-based Aegis missile-defense system deployed off the Korean coast," noted the *Wall Street Journal*, "with a potential" to shoot down a missile launched by north Korea.

According to a July 10 *Defense News* article, that system "has successfully hit its target seven times in a row," including in June.

On June 23, Tokyo and Washington signed an agreement to jointly produce anti-missile missiles. That same month, the two imperialist powers agreed for the first time to deploy Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) missiles on U.S. bases in Japan. In addition, Tokyo "signed an agreement to produce its own PAC-3 missiles for deployment at Japanese bases by the end of the year," reported *Investor's Business Daily.*

In response, China is making improvements to its missile technology. By the year's end Beijing plans to deploy "the first of 60 Dong Feng 31-series intercontinental ballistic missiles, which will be the first Chinese nuclear-tipped weapons that can target all of Europe or the entire continental United States," *Defense News* reported.

These missiles, which are scheduled to be put into operation in 2007, will have a range of 7,000 miles. In addition, a submarine-launched version of these missiles are projected to be deployed, the article states.

U.S. "experts" have expressed concern, *Defense News* reported, that the advances in Beijing's missile technology may prompt the Chinese government to relax its "no first use" policy, which states that its weapons will only be used in response to a nuclear strike. Washington has no such policy for its nuclear arsenal, which is far larger than China's.